

STAT

July 11, 1963

Mr. Richard M. Bissell

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Dear Mr. Bissell:

I am a free lance writer, and I am writing to you to see if you will be willing to give me some information. It is my understanding that it was you who conceived the U-2 flights. I would like to write an article on these flights, now that through the unforunate incident of Powers, they have been brought to light.

With my article I would like to have a biographical sketch of you. Too, I would like to know the nature of the flights, how many were made in a given time, the plan of them, the purpose of them, and the hazards that they could ensue.

Any information that you can give to me will be greatly appreciated, and ere I send the article for publication, I'll be delighted to send you a copy of it for you to read so you may do any corrections that you wish.

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I hope that you will be willing to help me out with this project of mine, and it will be a pleasure to hear from you soon.

Sincerely,

10 July 63

INSTITUTE FOR DEFENSE ANALYSES

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Richard M. Bissell, Jr., President

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Dear 

I am afraid that I cannot be as responsive as perhaps either of us should like in answering your letter of July 11. Although it is true that I was associated ("conceived" is too strong a word) with the U-2 flights to which you allude, I was at that time a public servant, and, like all people who have occupied similar positions, I am constrained even to this day in releasing information about the Powers incident and the operation of which it was a part. This constraint is only strengthened by the fact that I am today associated with an organization which, while not a component of the U. S. Government, is financed entirely by the Government. The information that was eventually declassified as a result of the Powers matter and its aftermath has, as you know, appeared extensively in the periodical press and in at least one book of which I am aware.

In short, I am not in a position to be of much assistance to you in your desire to write an article on these matters. In some ways I might wish it were otherwise, since a good bit of what has appeared in print has been distorted to a greater or lesser degree, largely because of the continuing unavailability of basic facts. In my view, however, this is one of the penalties that must be paid in order to protect information which the Government still considers it to be in the greater public interest not to reveal.

It may be that sometime in the future these rules will be relaxed as the whole subject becomes of more purely historical interest, but I would estimate that this will not happen for many years, if ever.

I regret my inability to be more helpful.

Very sincerely yours,

Richard M. Bissell, Jr.